

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0859

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP, PO

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE-SPANISH RELATIONS: PREVIEW OF ANTUNES-AREILZA
MEETING

REF: MADRID 0145 (DTG 091516Z JAN 76)

SUMMARY: SCHEDULED FEB 12 MEETING BETWEEN MELO ANTUNES AND
AREILZA WILL SIGNAL OPENING OF NEW PHASE IN IMPROVING PORTUGUESE-
SPANISH RELATIONS. THE PORTUGUESE WILL COME PREPARED TO ADDRESS
SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND WILL SEEK GOS HELP IN EXPANDING TRADE,
COMMERCE, AND TOURISM. END SUMMARY.

1. IMPROVING BILATERAL RELATIONS: WITH APPROACH OF SCHEDULED
FEB 12 MEETING BETWEEN PORTUGUESE FONMIN MELO ANTUNES AND
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SPANISH FONMIN AREILZA, PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH DIPLOMATS

HERE AGREE THAT BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE "ALMOST NORMAL."
FROM A LOW POINT LAST SEPTEMBER FOLLOWING THE SACKING OF THE
SPANISH EMBASSY HERE, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE
CONTINUED TO IMPROVE. THE LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN PORTUGAL FOLLOWING
THE QUASHING OF THE NOVEMBER 25, 1975 COUP ATTEMPT HAVE
ACCELERATED THIS PROCESS AS DID FRANCO'S DEMISE. BOTH PORTUGUESE AND
SPANISH OFFICIALS HERE BELIEVE THE FEB 12 MELO ANTUNES-AREILZA
MEETING, AT AN UNDISCLOSED SITE ON PORTUGUESE SIDE OF FRONTIER, WILL
LEAD TO THE FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS WHICH BOTH GOVERNMENTS
DESIRE.

2. RELATIONS UNINTERRUPTED: SPANISH DIPLOMATS IN LISBON ARE QUICK
TO POINT OUT THAT, DESPITE SERIOUS STRAINS LAST YEAR, OFFICIAL
RELATIONS WERE NEVER INTERRUPTED. ALTHOUGH AMBASSADOR POCH
RETURNED TO MADRID FOR LENGTHY "CONSULTATIONS" AND DID NOT
RETURN UNTIL EARLY JANUARY, HIS EMBASSY CONTINUED TO FUNCTION
ON A REDUCED SCALE FROM RENTED HOTEL SPACE. THE EMBASSY
RECENTLY "REOPENED" IN AN OFFICE BUILDING. PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH
DIPLOMATS AGREE THAT GOOD RELATIONS ARE IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH
COUNTRIES. THUS THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT, EVEN UNDER THE COMMUNIST-
SYMPATHIZING VASCO GONCALVES ADMINISTRATION, WAS QUICK TO ANNOUNCE THAT

IT WOULD PAY FULL COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES TO SPANISH PROPERTY.
SPANISH OFFICIALS HERE DENY THAT DISPLAYS OF ANTI-PORTUGUESE
SENTIMENT AND OTHER ACTS OF "RETALIATION" ON THE SPANISH
SIDE OF THE BORDER REFLECTED GOS POLICY.

3. LIKELY AGENDA: ACCORDING TO CHIEF OF THE PORTUGUESE FOREIGN
MINISTRY'S WESTERN EUROPEAN DIVISION, THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WILL
PROBABLY BE ON THE AGENDA AT THE MELO ANTUNES-AREILZA MEETING.

- COMPENSATION FOR SPANISH PROPERTIES OCCUPIED IN THE ALENTEJO.
- POLICY TOWARD REVOLUTIONARY GROUPS OPERATING OUT OF EACH OTHERS
TERRITORY.
- TRADE, COMMERCE AND TOURISM.

BOTH PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH DIPLOMATS AGREE THAT "NON-INTERVENTION"
REMAINS THE SINE QUA NON OF SOUND BILATERAL RELATIONS. ANTUNES
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CONFIRMED TO AMBASSADOR FEB 5 THAT THIS WOULD BE HIGH ON THE AGENDA.
THUS ANY COMMUNIQUE ISSUED FOLLOWING THE MEETING WILL PROBABLY LAY
HEAVY STRESS ON THIS POINT. THE MINISTERS CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED
TO DISCUSS BROADER AREAS OF COOPERATION, INCLUDING RELATIONS
WITH THE EC.

4. SOFT SPOTS REMAIN: AS LIKELY AGENDA TOPICS SUGGEST, THERE
ARE A NUMBER OF SOFT SPOTS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. DESPITE THE

MORE MODERATE COURSE FOLLOWED SINCE NOV 25, THE PORTUGUESE STILL CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE IN THE MIDST OF A "REVOLUTION ON THE WAY TO SOCIALISM." TO MANY HERE, THE GOVERNMENT OF JUAN CARLOS, FRAGA, AND AREILZA IS STILL THE LINEAL DESCENDENT OF FRANCO, AND THUS REMAINS "FASCIST." MANY SPANIARDS UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TO HARBOR SUSPICIONS ABOUT "DANGEROUS RADICALISM" IN PORTUGAL. THE ASSAULT ON THE SPANISH EMBASSY MADE A DEEP IMPRESSION ON THE LOCAL SPANISH COMMUNITY, AND WILL NOT BE SOON FORGOTTEN DESPITE OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS OF NORMAL RELATIONS.

5. IRRITATION AT SOCIALISTS: SPANISH DIPLOMATS CONFIRM GOS IRRITATION AT REPEATED ATTEMPTS BY PORTUGUESE POLITICAL FIGURES, PRINCIPALLY THE SOCIALISTS, TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL AT SPAIN'S EXPENSE. THE MOTIVES OF SOARES AND THE PS IN PLAYING UPON THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH SPANISH COMMUNIST LEADER CARRILLO TO EMBARRASS AND FURTHER ISOLATE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST LEADER CUNHAL ARE UNDERSTOOD BY SPANISH DIPLOMATS, BUT ARE NOT APPRECIATED. NOR IS THE PERSISTENT ATTENTION GIVEN SPAIN BY VISITING DELEGATIONS, SUCH AS THE MID-JANUARY VISIT TO MADRID BY A SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL STUDY GROUP, WHICH INCLUDED SEVERAL PS LEADERS.

6. FUTURE PROSPECTS: BOTH GOVERNMENTS HAVE A STRONG INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS. THE FEB 12 TALKS SIGNAL THE APPROVAL OF A NEW MORE CONSTRUCTIVE PHASE IN PORTUGAL'S RELATIONS WITH SPAIN. THE PORTUGUESE ANTICIPATE A FRANK DISCUSSION OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND WILL

SEEK GOS ASSISTANCE IN EXPANDING TRADE, COMMERCE, AND TOURISM. THE TALKS, THE FIRST SINCE APRIL 25, 1974, SHOULD PAVE THE WAY FOR MORE FREQUENT CONSULTATIONS.
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